

Message Text

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73

ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1959

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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SUBJ: WHITLAM REPORTS TO NATIONAL PRESS CLUB ON HIS VISITS TO
JAPAN AND CHINA

REF: A) TOKYO 14452 B) STATE 219191

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM REPORTED TO NATIONAL PRESS CLUB IN CANBERRA NOV 8 ON HIS RECENT VISITS TO JAPAN AND CHINA. IN DISCUSSING BOTH VISITS, PM INDICATED GOA HAS GONE LONG WAY IN ACHIEVING COMMUNICATION WITH GOVERNMENTS THERE. HE FORESHADOWED POSSIBLE ROLE FOR AUSTRALIA AS "HONEST BROKER" BETWEEN U.S. AND CHINA AND JAPAN AND CHINA BUT DENIED ANY AUSTRALIAN INTENTION TO BECOME "ADVOCATE" FOR CHINA IN FE REGION. IN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS, PM REITERATED HIS BELIEF THAT OUTSIDE GOVERNMENTS SHOULD CEASE SUPPLYING BELLIGERENTS IN MIDDLE EAST AND INDICATED SOVIET

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UNION WAS LESS INTERESTED IN FAR EAST AFFAIRS THAN IN THOSE OF

EUROPE AS REASON FOR EXCLUDING SOVIET UNION FROM THOSE COUNTRIES WITH WHICH AUSTRALIA EXPECTED TO DEAL IN FE AFFAIRS.

2. WHITLAM'S SPEECH WAS CONSTRUCTED AROUND THEME THAT SITUATION IN AREA HAD UNDERGONE VAST CHANGE IN PAST FEW YEARS, INCLUDING IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN U.S. AND CHINA AND JAPAN AND CHINA. IN PRESENT SITUATION, WHITLAM DESCRIBED POSSIBLE ROLE FOR AUSTRALIA AS MEDIATOR AMONG THESE THREE GOVERNMENTS ON BASIS OF AUSTRALIAN RELATIONSHIP TO BOTH U.S. AND JAPAN. WHITLAM DENIED AUSTRALIA WOULD BE CHINA'S "ADVOCATE" IN REGION, SINCE SUCH A ROLE FOR AUSTRALIA IS NOT DESIRED EITHER BY CHINA OR AUSTRALIAN NEIGHBORS. IN SUM, WHITLAM STATED THAT "ON CERTAIN ISSUES AND ON SOME OCCASIONS AND AT ALL TIMES IN A GENERAL WAY, WE CAN BE ONE HONEST BROKER AMONG OTHERS".

3. WITH RELATION TO HIS VISIT TO JAPAN, WHITLAM MADE FOLLOWING POINTS: A) PRIMARY PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT WAS TO REASSURE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE DEPENDABILITY OF AUSTRALIA AS A SUPPLIER OF RAW MATERIALS. WHITLAM STATED HE COULD THINK OF NO OTHER REASSURANCES WHICH AUSTRALIA COULD GIVE TO JAPAN WHICH WOULD ENCOURAGE THAT COUNTRY TO CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE "NEW COURSE" OF JAPANESE FOREIGN POLICY. WHITLAM DESCRIBED THE "NEW COURSE" AS JAPAN'S DETERMINATION TO BE "THE FIRST INDUSTRIAL POWER TO BREAK THE NEXUS BETWEEN ADEQUATE ACCESS TO RAW MATERIALS ON THE ONE HAND AND MILITARY THREATS OR FORCE ON THE OTHER." B) WHITLAM STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE CONCLUSION OF A BILATERAL TREATY BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN, THE NIPPON/AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS AGREEMENT, WHICH WILL GO BEYOND THE USUAL SCOPE OF A TRADITIONAL TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP, COMMERCE AND NAVIGATION. WHITLAM DID NOT DEFINE THE TERMS PROPOSED IN THIS NEW AGREEMENT, ALTHOUGH HE CASTIGATED PRECEDING AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS FOR NOT PURSUING AN AGREEMENT WITH JAPAN BEFORE NOW. C) WITH REGARD TO AUSTRALIAN RESOURCES POLICY IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY, WHITLAM REITERATED THE GOA'S INTENTION TO CONTROL INVESTMENT IN THIS FIELD. HE NOTED THAT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IN THIS REGARD WAS WELL UNDERSTOOD BY THE JAPANESE WHO HAD BEEN CONTROLLING INVESTMENT IN A SIMILAR FASHION FOR SOME TIME. THE ONLY QUESTION THE JAPANESE HAD WITH REGARD TO THIS POLICY, WHITLAM SAID, WAS WHY IT HAD TAKEN THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SO LONG TO DEVELOP AND APPLY THIS POLICY.

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4. WHITLAM DEVOTED A SMALL PORTION OF HIS SPEECH TO GENERALIZATIONS ABOUT HIS TALKS IN CHINA. HE DESCRIBED CHOU EN LAI AS "ONE OF THE AUTHENTIC GREAT STATESMEN OF THIS CENTURY". HE MENTIONED SPENDING SOME 20 HOURS DURING THE FIVE DAYS OF HIS CHINA VISIT IN CONVERSATION WITH THE CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER BUT DID NOT ELABORATE ON THE TOPICS DISCUSSED.

5. QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD. IN ADDITION TO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON WHITLAM'S CONVERSATIONS WITH SIHANOUK AND CAMBODIAN QUESTION IN UN WHICH ARE BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY, WHITLAM MADE SUBSTANTIALLY FOLLOWING RESPONSES TO OTHER QUESTIONS:

A) MIDDLE EAST: WHITLAM DESCRIBED GOA'S CURRENT ATTITUDE TOWARD ME CONFLICT AS "NEUTRAL" AND STATED ALL PREVIOUS AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS GOING BACK TO AND INCLUDING PRIME MINISTERSHIP OF SIR ROBERT MENZIES HAD BEEN "NEUTRAL" IN ME CONFLICT. WHITLAM USED OCCASION TO REITERATE HIS PREVIOUS STATEMENT THAT THE WAY TO STOP ME CONFLICT WAS FOR OUTSIDE GOVERNMENTS TO STOP SENDING SUPPLIES TO BELLIGERENTS. B) ROLE OF SOVIET UNION IN THE FE: WHEN REPORTED NOTED SOVIET UNION WAS EXCLUDED FROM COUNTRIES MENTIONED BY PM AS THOSE WITH WHICH AUSTRALIA WOULD BE DEALING IN REGIONAL POLITICAL CONTEXT, WHITLAM RESPONDED THAT CAPITAL OF SOVIET UNION IS IN EUROPE AND THAT CENTER OF SOVIET INTEREST IS THERE RATHER THAN IN FAR EAST. IN THIS CONNECTION, WHITLAM ALSO NOTED HE EXPECTED TO TRAVEL TO EUROPE IN JUNE, 1974, VISITING SEVERAL EUROPEAN CAPITALS, INCLUDING MOSCOW.

C. US WORLDWIDE MILITARY ALERT: REPORTED ASKED WHETHER U.S. BASES IN AUSTRALIA WERE PUT ON ALERT PRIOR TO GENERAL AMERICAN ALERT AND WHETHER WHITLAM WAS INFORMED IN ADVANCE. HE REPLIED THAT HE DIDN'T KNOW AND HAD NOT BEEN TOLD. HE ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS FOR DOMESTIC AMERICAN CONSUMPTION.
GREEN

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